

WHAT HAS “AMANDA” CHANGED?

**A look at the ways “Amanda’s Law”
has impacted domestic violence cases**

KELLEY CAULK | DOCJT STAFF ATTORNEY

M

ore than a year has passed since a law went into effect honoring Amanda Ross, a woman murdered by her fiancé after he violated a domestic violence order designed to prevent him from hurting her again.

Former lawmaker Steve Nunn has since pleaded guilty to killing Ross, and a battle for more substantial domestic violence laws led to the passage of Amanda’s Law in 2010, changing the face of domestic violence protections for victims in Kentucky.

While the reality of putting some of these statutes into practice has proved difficult, there are positive aspects of this legislation that have received little attention, but do provide additional protection for those victims of domestic violence (petitioners) who ask the courts in our state for help to stop the abuse by the perpetrators (respondents).

For example, under a new section of the Kentucky Revised Statutes, §403.747(2)(a) the Petitioner is permitted “... to provide [to] the court ... a list of specified areas from which [he or she] would like the respondent to be excluded ...” when requesting an emergency protective order. In the Petition, the petitioner must explain to the court why the respondent should be prohibited from coming to specific areas and the benefits to the petitioner of such an exclusion. An example of an additional specified area a petitioner might want to exclude the respondent from would be